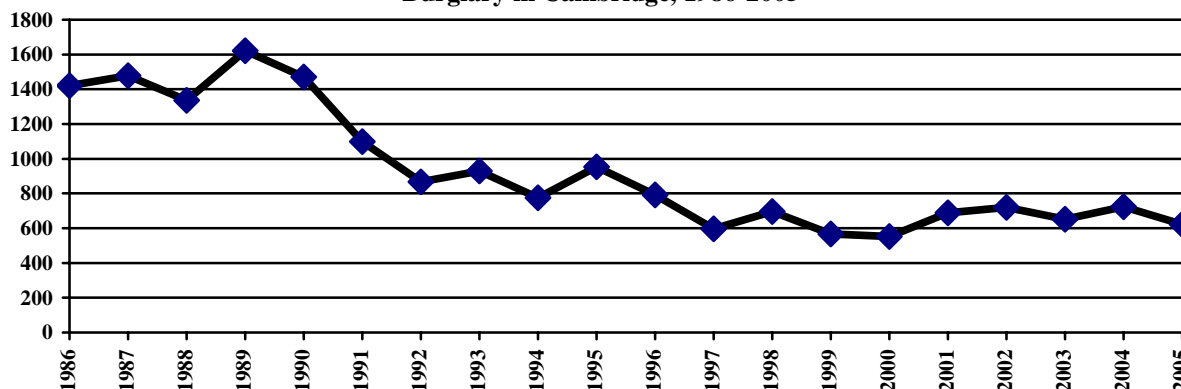


BURGLARY

describes the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft. The use of force to gain entry is not required to classify an offense as burglary. Burglary attempts are included in the total.

**Twenty Year Review:
Burglary in Cambridge, 1986-2005**



724 reported in 2004 • 623 reported in 2005

Burglary is categorized as a more serious crime than larceny since it involves the use of force and unlawful entry to a business or residence. Perpetrators employ various techniques to enter residences or businesses. Because burglars need to pull off their heist quickly, break-ins are occasionally only unsuccessful “attempts,” in which no entry is made, but damage is caused to the structure.

	2004	2005	% Change
Commercial Burglary	139	133	-4%
Residential Burglary	585	490	-16%
Total	724	623	-14%

Burglars often fall into two types: the “amateur” and the “professional”. Amateurs are likely to smash windows or kick in doors to enter unoccupied buildings. These burglars will often take light, visible property, like a purse left on a table, jars of change and other less costly items. “Professional” burglars, alternatively, are more sophisticated in their methods. They often pry open a door, disable alarms and even enter occupied establishments and tend to steal higher-priced items.

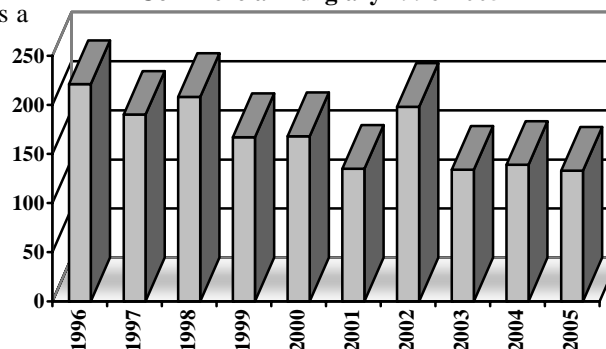
For the purposes of analysis, burglary is divided into two main categories: *commercial* and *residential*.

Over the past twenty years, burglary in Cambridge has decreased by approximately 47%. Burglary crimes peaked in the late 1980’s and dramatically decreased, beginning in the early 1990’s.

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

A commercial burglary, more commonly referred to as a *commercial break*, is an unlawful entry into a commercial establishment, including business, government, religious or retail establishments. Between 2004 and 2005 there was a 4% decrease in commercial breaks in Cambridge. Over the past five years commercial breaks have averaged approximately 148 incidents a year, a 23% decrease from the previous five-year average.

Commercial Burglary 1996-2005



A wide variety of establishment types are targeted for commercial burglary using an array of methods. Most breaks fall into one of the following categories:

- ◆ **Smash & Grab** burglaries target display windows along major routes. The burglar runs or drives up, smashes the window, steals valuables from the immediate area of the window, and runs off. The entire endeavor may take less than a minute.
- ◆ **Retail** burglars pry or smash their way into stores, and other locations with cash registers on the premises. They are hoping for cash left in the register or the safe and may grab some cigarettes or a stack of lottery tickets on the way out.
- ◆ **Restaurant/Bar** burglars often cross multiple jurisdictions, breaking into similar franchises, looking for safes. Safes and registers were targeted in a majority of the cases in 2005.
- ◆ **Business** burglars enter real estate offices, law firms, technology companies, and other offices, looking for laptop computers and other expensive equipment. The majority of these incidents were repeat locations in which an intruder gained entrance into locked offices and stole computer equipment.
- ◆ **Construction Site** thieves are a special breed of burglars who know how to select, steal, and sell expensive power tools, building supplies, and heavy equipment. They are often in the business themselves, and may have done some sub-contract work on the site that they target. Of the five 2005 incidents, the three at the end of the year appeared to have been related.
- ◆ **Safe Crackers** are a more professional type of burglar in the City. In these instances, the perpetrators are entering businesses with high cash intake, such as restaurants and bars, and take cash in most instances.
- ◆ **Church** burglars are usually homeless individuals with substance abuse problems. They enter lightly secured houses of worship, looking for petty cash and easily fenced items.
- ◆ **School** burglars are generally juveniles, breaking into their own schools to vandalize or to steal

TYPE OF PREMISE	2004	2005
Bar/Restaurant	24	50
Other: includes miscellaneous establishments.	24	38
Business Offices	41	10
Retail Establishments	24	10
Industrial/Construction	5	7
Church	3	7
Convenience Store	7	6
School	8	4
Laundromat/Cleaners	3	1
TOTAL	139	133

computers and other expensive goods they see every day.

IN FOCUS: PROFESSIONAL COMMERCIAL BURGLARY PATTERN

A series of commercial burglaries, which began in early November of 2004, was active throughout the year and affected many of the jurisdictions around Cambridge, including Boston, Somerville, and Arlington. Restaurants and bars were the most common business type targeted in this series, although flower shops and convenience stores were also affected. The majority of these incidents displayed a level of sophistication employed by a professional burglary crew. For example, alarm or telephone wires were being cut, and entry was often made by cutting holes in walls from adjacent businesses, or by cutting holes in roofs. Many incidents were reported on Sunday nights into early Monday morning, when the safes were full with cash from weekend business. In most of these cases, these professional burglars stole or peeled open the safe, stealing large sums of cash. In some instances they also targeted lottery tickets, although this may have been a separate underlying pattern and not necessarily related to the safe theft pattern. The Cambridge Police have been working tirelessly with members of neighboring police departments, private security companies and business owners to solve these cases.

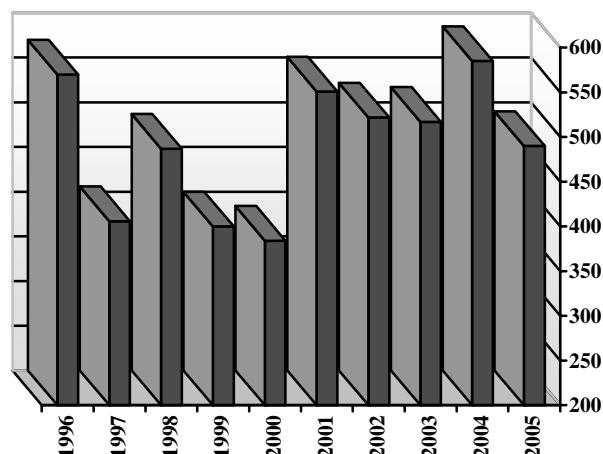
GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF COMMERCIAL BURGLARIES					
Business District	2003	2004	2005	% Change 04-05	% of Total
Massachusetts Avenue 1500-1900	3	10	16	60%	12%
Porter Square/North Cambridge	13	6	16	167%	12%
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	15	4	16	300%	12%
Central Square	18	49	15	-69%	11%
Inman Square/Harrington	21	13	15	15%	11%
East Cambridge/Galleria	10	8	15	88%	11%
Harvard Square	22	20	14	-30%	11%
Alewife/West Cambridge	18	16	14	-13%	11%
Kendall Square/M.I.T.	10	11	8	-27%	6%
Cambridgeport/Riverside	4	2	4	100%	3%

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

Residential burglaries, or “housebreaks,” are of particular concern to local police and communities because of the loss of personal security felt when one’s home is invaded and possessions are stolen.

Housebreaks were down 16% in the City in 2005 compared to 2004. This total includes 74 (15%) incidents that were attempted, but not completed housebreaks. The greatest decreases were recorded in Area 4 and Inman. Totals in those neighborhoods had spiked in 2004, so their 2005 totals are more reflective of the typical averages in those areas. East Cambridge recorded a 63% increase, due to a couple of patterns during the year, which had targeted houses and apartments under construction. For detailed synopses of 2005 neighborhood housebreak activity, please refer to the Neighborhood Section.

Residential Burglary, 1996-2005



GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

Area	2003	2004	2005	% Change 04-05	% of Total
Mid-Cambridge	114	89	74	-17%	15%
Cambridgeport	51	68	68	N/A	14%
East Cambridge	35	38	62	63%	13%
North Cambridge	70	49	52	6%	11%
Peabody	58	66	48	-27%	10%
West Cambridge	47	47	41	-13%	8%
Area 4	41	70	37	-47%	8%
Riverside	38	47	36	-23%	7%
Inman/Harrington	20	61	34	-44%	7%
Agassiz	24	36	26	-28%	5%
Strawberry Hill	15	11	8	-27%	2%
M.I.T. Area	1	2	3	50%	1%
Cambridge Highlands	3	1	1	N/A	0%

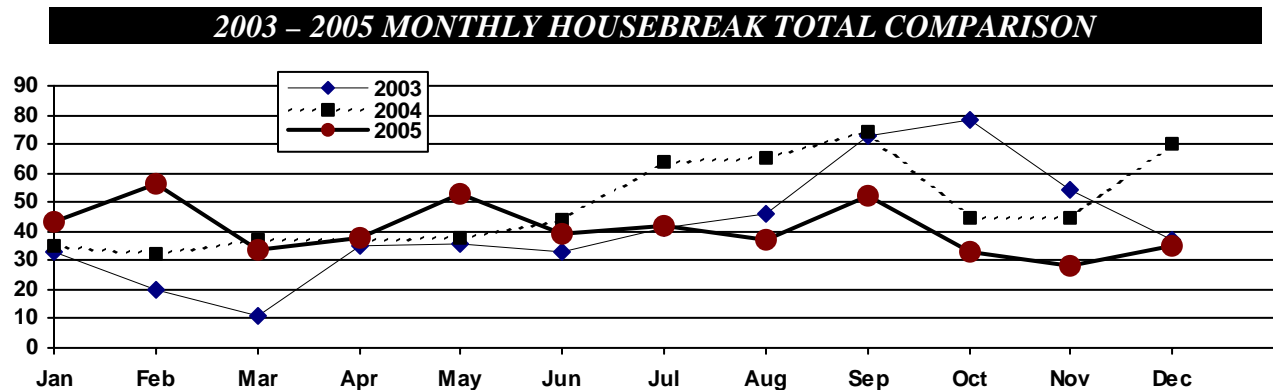
* Please note that due to reclassification these numbers may differ slightly from those reported in the UCR.

Housebreaks in Cambridge are most often perpetrated by unknown suspects, although a small percentage of incidents involve acquaintances or family members. For example, 6% of all reported housebreak victims named an *acquaintance* as a suspect, including friends, roommates or neighbors. An additional 4% of incidents were categorized as *domestic*, perpetrated by family members, ex-boyfriends, etc. The most common method of entry is by forcing the front door, however, a large number of breaks take place during the summer months, in which entry is made via unlocked/open windows. The property targeted in housebreaks classically include cash and jewelry, but in a society where valuable electronics are owned by many, laptops, Ipods, digital cameras and DVD players are now a common target of theft.

Top Five Items Stolen/Targeted		
	In Housebreaks:	In Commercial Burglaries:
1	Laptops	Cash
2	Jewelry	Tools
3	Cash	Laptop/Computer
4	Cameras	Cigarettes
5	DVD Players	Safes

Housebreaks most commonly occur during the daytime while victims are not home. Suspects are often long gone by the time victims return home and call the police. Despite this, an arrest was made in nearly 30 housebreaks in 2005. Victims calling police immediately after walking in on the suspects in their homes helped in effecting some arrests, while attentive neighbors assisted in other instances. Seven arrests were of perpetrators in domestic –related incidents.

Entry is gained into homes by various methods. Doors or windows are broken or pried open in 60% of the housebreaks in 2005, and was the most common method reported. However, unlocked windows or doors enabled suspects to enter without force in at least 13% of all housebreaks in 2005. Often, warm weather during the year causes people to leave windows open, and this makes for very tempting targets for housebreakers.



Protect your home or business! Please see the Protect Yourself section starting on page 137 for tips on how you can protect against becoming a victim of a commercial burglary or housebreak.

2005 TIMELINE OF CAMBRIDGE HOUSEBREAK PATTERNS

January started with a continuing pattern from late 2004 in Cambridgeport. The daytime forced entry breaks ceased with the arrest of a professional burglar. During this month incidents in East Cambridge also rose.

The East Cambridge pattern remained into **February**. Repeat incidents of these daytime breaks were recorded on Winter and Spring Streets. Part of the high rate of housebreaks reported in February can be attributed to incidents in Mid-Cambridge, including a six-incident rash of breaks early in the month.

March was not characterized by the emergence of new patterns, but the activity in East Cambridge continued through mid-March.

In **June** incidents began to increase again in Mid-Cambridge. Half of the forced door entry breaks were the result of multiple burglaries at a single location.

Incidents in West Cambridge continued to increase into **May**. These incidents were characterized by forced window entry during the daytime. Incidents in North Cambridge of this nature also rose. In both neighborhoods laptops were targeted for theft, but in West Cambridge a discernable pattern of jewelry theft developed.

Housebreaks did not significantly increase from March to **April**, but Mid-Cambridge incurred an increase in burglaries. Incidents in West Cambridge also indicated an increase.

From **July** to **August** incidents increased in North Cambridge and Cambridgeport. Housebreaks in Cambridgeport were characterized by window entry and various property was targeted for theft, including DVD players and laptops.

September brought a pattern of window entry breaks to Mid-Cambridge. In these incident suspects were mainly stealing laptops. Window entry breaks also re-emerged in West Cambridge, where a similar pattern had taken place in the early summer.

Housebreaks incidents decreased significantly in **October**. The window break pattern in Cambridgeport continued into this month, but dissipated by mid-October.

By year's end, 2005 had brought a 16% decrease in housebreaks. The neighborhoods with the most significant declines were Area 4 and Inman/Harrington.

December was marked by the return of window entry breaks in Cambridgeport and Mid-Cambridge. During this month, the highest number of housebreak arrests were made; five incidents resulted in arrests.

November experienced the year's lowest rate of housebreak reports. Many of the month's incidents were characterized by incidents in which multiple residences were targeted in the same residential complex or street. This was the case in Agassiz where a notable increase was experienced.